
Dr. *F R E I N D*'s

S E R M O N

Preached before the HONOURABLE

HOUSE of COMMONS.

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Veneris, 31^o die Januarii, 1755.

Ordered,

THAT the Thanks of this House be given to the Reverend Dr. *William Freind*, for the Sermon by him preached Yesterday before this House, at *St. Margaret's Westminster*; and that he be desired to print the same; and that Mr. *Ellis*, the Lord *Dupplin*, Mr. *Shelley*, and Mr. *George Onslow* do acquaint him therewith.

J. DYSON,
Cl. Dom. Com.

694.i.17.
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S E R M O N

Preached before the HONOURABLE

HOUSE of COMMONS,

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St. Margaret's Westminster,

On Thursday, January 30, 1755.

Being appointed to be observed as the Day of
the *Martyrdom* of King CHARLES I.

By WILLIAM FREIND, D.D.
Prebendary of *Westminster*, and Chaplain in
Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN and JAMES RIVINGTON, in
St. Paul's Church-yard. MDCCCLV.

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I P E T. II. 16.

*As free, and not using your Liberty for a
cloke of Maliciousness, but as the Ser-
vants of God.*

HUMAN LIBERTY may be consider-
ed as *Moral* and *Civil*; the former be-
longing to Man as a *private person*,
the other resulting from the *nature* of that *Com-
munity* of which he is a *member*. But in the
writings of the *New Testament* we are presented
with *another* view of *Liberty*, which is properly
Christian. *Christian Liberty* in its *full* extent doth
indeed imply *Moral*; but in the *partial* accepta-
tion of it is usually *opposed* to the *Ceremonial Law*
of the *Jews*, the obligation whereof is dissolved
by the *Gospel*.

The words of the text refer to *Christian Li-
berty*, which, by the indiscretion of some, and the
corruption of others, had been early applied to
vicious purposes; particularly, as it seems, to
stir up disobedience to the Civil Power. The

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Apostle

Apostle elsewhere censures some, who, among other marks of dissolute manners, *despised government, and were not afraid to speak evil of dignities*, seducing others to do the like. To this seduction the *Jewish* Converts to the Gospel were especially liable, as it fell in with certain *Jewish prejudices*, which we cannot well suppose them wholly to have laid aside. Aversion to a *heathen* Government was no unaccountable prejudice among *Jews*, which lasted as long as their State, and helped to put an end to it. With them it was a question, *whether it was lawful to pay tribute unto Cesar*: hence it was easy to persuade those of that nation, who by conversion became subjects of CHRIST's kingdom, to *despise heathen governors*, and, as if now under a new *Theocracy*, to plead exemption from *human Jurisdiction* by virtue of that *Liberty*, *wherewith CHRIST had made them free*.

The obvious consequences of such a conduct might well alarm the apostles of CHRIST, and excite them the more strongly to injoin *subjection* from every soul to the Governors of the State, shewing the *source* and *sanction* of their Power, the *nature* of their Office, and the *ends* of their Institution. This St. Paul explains to the *Jewish* converts at Rome, and St. Peter here to those that were *scattered* among the nations in the
words

words preceding the text; *submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the King as supreme; or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.* Herein reminding them that *their Freedom* consisted in being *the servants of God*, and making *His Will* the rule of their actions: a Freedom, which from its *nature* could not dispense with *any* moral obligations, but on the contrary enforced them *all*.

Such was the *particular* occasion of the words: to which however we need not in the farther consideration of them confine ourselves; but may suppose that the Apostle, who well knew the natural propensity in man in the exercise of *Liberty* to slide into the abuse of it, designed to admonish not only *those* to whom he *then* wrote, but *all succeeding Christians* also, *not to use their Liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.*

And that this was *indeed* the design of the Apostle, seems further evident from the *motive* he here gives for the observance of the precept. If

men are concerned to observe it, because they are *the servants of God*, Christians of *all Ages* and Nations are *equally* obliged so to do; and consequently are obliged to acquire such a *knowledge* of this Liberty, as is necessary to prevent the *Abuse* of it.

In the search after this *knowledge* it will appear that Man is a dependent feeble creature, deriving the power he enjoys from his great Creator, and therefore unable to extend it beyond the limits fixed by Him.---That he is not only thus subject to *God*, but is also in a certain degree subject to those of his *own kind*, whose power being equal to his own may *obstruct* the execution of his designs, and must therefore *take something from* that Liberty, which otherwise would be his portion. That where he *meets* not with *these* obstructions (arising from the frame of his nature, and from the social connections to which the condition of it impels him, where he *meets* not with *these*) to *prevent* his acting, he may *run upon* others that *stop* him in his career to the happiness he pursues, and effectually disappoint his purposes. And lastly, that he is but too likely *to be* thus disappointed, considering the many and various objects that offer themselves to his choice; all of them promising him happiness, and concealing the evils with which they

they abound under fair appearances. And then when any of these Phantoms have decoyed him into misery, subjected him to Vice and Folly, brought down the dignity of his nature to a level almost with that of *the Beasts which perish*, he deserves not the *name* of a *Man*; hath lost his *Station* in *Nature*, makes a *Void* in the *Order of Beings*, and destroys that *Beauty* which results from a regular connection of the whole. *True Liberty* therefore doth not open, as *some* imagine, a *boundless* field to the wanton exercise of our power, but requires *controll* and *restraint*; to which it must be subject, in order to acquire those co-operating influences, without which it cannot attain its proper end: but when exerted under due restraint, it is then duly assisted, and is distinguished as the *noblest Privilege* of our nature, by accomplishing the *noblest Purposes*: it secures *happiness* to Man, it perfects the *grace* and *order* of the Universe, and as the result of these gives *glory* to GOD.

Men therefore do never more rashly trifle or grossly err, than when they urge *pretences* for a *lawless use* of Liberty: the *Libertine* may assert *this* to be the *most perfect* use of it, founding *his Freedom* in those excesses which prove him a slave. But these are *ravings* of a *disordered mind*, not to be regarded, whilst we see before

us.

us the evils which arise from every abuse of Liberty *Moral* or *Civil*; disturbance of peace and order; calamity private and public; convulsions in the state; distractions even in the Church of God. These do sadly evince that Nature *itself* is injured by the *violation* of Law, and that therefore Law is requisite to preserve the *Perfection* of Nature.

The truth of this doctrine is but too aptly illustrated by that unhappy Period in our own History, which THIS DAY calls to our remembrance; wherein Liberty was *abused* with a degree of *Hypocrisy* and *Maliciousness*, that will ever be a *Reproach* to this Nation. An attempt to display the many miseries that sprung from that abuse, would as much exceed the *compass* as the *intention* of this discourse, tending to a needless revival of passions that are better at rest. But to pass over *without notice* a series of Transactions so interesting and important, would be to preclude ourselves from that Instruction which is the end of Calamity; and which comes with a *peculiar* force, when conveyed to us by *those* Calamities, in which *our own* Country, *our own* Progenitors have been involved.

Let us then reflect a while upon these sad times, as we have a *right* to do, *freely*; but not using this Liberty as a *pretence* for malicious invective,

vective, or partial resentment, *but as the servants of God*; duly sensible, that we are assembled before Him, *not to inflame our passions* but to *lament our shame*, and if possible *diminish* it, by publicly testifying our just abhorrence of the crime of This Day.

Impartial observers will probably perceive, that in the beginning of the Reign which produced these Troubles, Measures were pursued which cannot be justified, and need not be aggravated; but which, if considered with candor, may admit of *some* mitigation, due allowance being made for the *prejudices* from which they sprung. Mistaken principles imbibed in *education*, instilled as the *dictates of Religion*, warranted by Men *eminent in learned Professions*, and *powerfully stimulated* by some who had the *chief influence* on the *counsels* of the King; these were surely as *strong obstructions* as one can well conceive to lie in the way of human Prudence. Prejudices thus early introduced, studiously cherished, and fixed by *Habit*, grow as it were to the *constitution* of the man, and become a kind of *second Nature*. The *removal* of them is usually one of the *slowest* works of Time, requiring *gentle Methods* and *favourable Opportunities*. And *had* these Methods been faithfully applied in the Instance before us, possibly the calamities that followed had been

been prevented : but these being omitted or unsuccessfully conducted, *other* methods were found requisite, more apt to *provoke* than to *persuade* or *convince*. Thus unhappily the Lesson, which should have been *instilled* into the King by *those* in whom He *most* *confided*, and who had the only *mild* occasions of doing it, was left to be *inforced* with *severity* by *those* whom He regarded as his *enemies*.

It hath been observed also, and should be remembered, that the limits of Prerogative did *then* admit of more debate and difference of opinion than *at present*, and had in *former* Reigns been *very unwarrantably* extended with *less* notice and complaint.

Had then the temper of those times admitted of cool and charitable reflection, these Considerations might have inclined men to *overlook* the injuries that were *past*, when the King was brought to make the *ample concessions* demanded of him. But unfortunately these concessions came not till the Storm had begun to *rage high*, and those *angry Spirits*, which had broken loose to raise it, would not be recalled within the *bounds* which they had *forsaken*. *Passions* then took the lead, the restraints of *Law* were *disregarded*, and of course Disorder became general. Measures of *Peace* were then *in vain* projected ;
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mutual distrust increasng with resentment, and both fomented with industrious malice, rendered Offers suspicious, Terms difficult, and Treaties fruitless; till the sad Event of THIS DAY put an end to the Conflict. These Troubles did however *exemplarily* prove the *patient* virtue of the *Royal Sufferer*; whose Fortitude and Piety, *constantly* preserved to his *latest* Moments, claim Respect.

But we may pay this Respect without detracting from Others; especially from *Those* who, whilst the minds of the People were held in fear and suspense, did *first* make the stand in defence of *Common Liberty*. Partial Interests did indeed early supersede those of the Public; and the *Name* of the People of *England* gave a Sanction to Commotions, that continued when the *Cause* of the People had long been forgotten. And this is but too common an Effect of Public Strife; in which the *first* Object of Contention is frequently laid aside, to make way for others of a different kind. In a Course of Opposition *new* Objects naturally arise, *new Characters* interfere, *new Connexions* and *new Systems* overrule according to the *variable* Temper and Complexion of disordered Times. Thus, in the Course of that long Opposition the principal Purpose of it was soon lost, and the same Means

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were carried on to serve different Ends; Many acting with concealed designs, and under the colour of opposing the *Measures* of the King, striking at the *Root* of *Monarchy* itself. *Foreign* Malice also mixed in the Discord of those times; Happy was it for *Us*, that *Foreign Arms* were otherwise engaged; *active Emissaries* were however too successful in fomenting the Animosities of divided *Protestants*; infusing that *Fanatic* Rage, which in minds already heated, quickly kindled into Flame. This became a fit Instrument of Mischief in the hands of wicked Men, who had nothing *less* in view than those Objects for which they profess to contend, Religion and Liberty; both of which they effectually destroyed. In that fatal Opposition therefore, it would be injurious to conclude *All* under one Description; blending together *Facts* and *Names*, which circumstances do plainly separate and distinguish. Too many, indeed, from a laudable zeal to *secure* just limits did *themselves* overpass them, heedlessly following artful Leaders into unforeseen excesses: which may serve as a Caution to warn others of the Danger of such Confederacies, as may too often oblige them to become *Partakers* of *other Mens Sins*. *False Principles* of Honour usually *then* take place, and men imagine themselves engaged too far to recede;

cede; sometimes are urged on by despair. Yet should not these be branded with the Reproach of This Day, so *monstrous* in its Kind, that the very *conception* thereof seems to have lain *beyond* the reach of men, till many circumstances had by a long and strange Series concurred to render *some* capable of *attempting*, and *others* quiet in suffering it. The Reproach of This Day belongs to men of a *different* Class, co-operating for a time with *worthier Associates*, whilst *they kept secret among themselves their wickedness, every man in the deep of his Heart*; but when the Hypocrites *threw off the Mask*, abhorred by *true Christians* of every denomination, who doubtless said as we should naturally say, *O my Soul! come not thou into their Secret, unto their Assembly, mine Honor, be not Thou united.*

Reasonable men of all Persuasions, we may be assured, had not only an abhorrence of this abominable Parricide, but a just Concern for the Calamities under which they saw their Country labour, suffering every where the effects of Violence, Oppression, Subversion of all rank amongst men, and consequently of all order in Church or State. And indeed what else could be expected when these *men of Violence* became the Governors of the Nation?--- the *true friends of Liberty* standing, as it were, at a
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distance, the sad Spectators of its ruin: bewailing then too late that unchristian heat and distempered zeal which had been their Sin, and thus justly become the instrument of their Punishment.

The hopes of Many, who had contributed to the violence of the Times with *better* intentions, were eminently disappointed by the Event of them.---The *Republic*, the *Idol* of those visionary Politicians, fondly set up to be the *Asylum* of Liberty, served but to protect and give Sanction to a *Multitude* of *Tyrants*. These brought on that Anarchy and Confusion, that soon made way for one of their own Brethren to become their Ruler; a Ruler the most arbitrary under the title of a Protector.---In like manner Those who had promoted the destruction of the established Church, discovered in the End, that they had therewith destroyed Religious Liberty, and indeed Religion itself: having raised up a kind of Spiritual Tyranny, far exceeding that which had before been just matter of complaint, and paved the way to those Extremes, which seldom fail to accompany each other, Enthusiasm and Infidelity.

Can we then look back to those scenes of Trouble and Confusion without trembling at the consequences of *Liberty abused*? *We that*
now

now dwell at ease in our Sion, can we view unmoved these Afflictions of our Fore-fathers?--- who wisely carefull of our Instruction, not to walk after their Transgression, lest we suffer their Punishment, did ordain THIS DAY to be for ever a Day of Lamentation among their Posterity, that the Land should mourn and all the Families therein, as not unconcerned in the misfortunes consequent to the Offence of This Day. With a like view hath our Church also appointed the Words of the Text to be read upon This Day, as a lesson proper to remind a free People of the due Bounds of Freedom, which, like other Blessings; in proportion to its Excellence, may by Abuse become a Curse.

Let us then apply this lesson to ourselves in general, and Every man to himself in particular.

The due Bounds of Freedom turn our attention to those Duties, Religious and Civil, which jointly strengthen and support each other. Of these, Religious Duties only reach the Heart; that principal Seat of Liberty; the Source from whence every Abuse of it proceeds, and to which therefore the Remedy to stop such Abuses must be first applied. Evil, when generated, may be Here secreted in impenetrable Recesses, till Maturity gives it Strength, and Opportunity the means of operating, perhaps

haps with *success* : to prevent which, the *Almighty Searcher* hath notified to us that *His Presence* even *here* is not to be eluded : He hath taught us to *revere* these Recesses as peculiarly Subject to *His Visitation* ; and to prepare them for his Reception. He hath given us a *Religion pure and undefiled*, a *perfect Law of Liberty*, to which we may have recourse in *His Holy Word*. This, and this *only*, can duly regulate our *Actions*, by restraining our *Thoughts*, and limiting our *Desires*. This, the vital Principle of every Virtue, warms and enlarges the Affections, corrects the intemperance of selfish Passions, and by *refining* the *Notions*, *improves* the *Practice* of Social Duties. Hence the Relation we bear to others, becomes a powerful Motive to *restrain* or *excite* our Action, as the influence of Example may require, and *so* to *use* our *Liberty*, as *not* to disturb or *offend* another ; the more cautiously abstaining, not only from actual Vice, but from all irreverence to *Institutes* that tend to preserve Order and Peace in *Church* or *State*. These, however *naturally* indifferent, having the Sanction of *Law*, may not be neglected or profaned according to the humor of every private Person. The *Gospel* indeed dispells *unworthy* notions of Religion with a Spirit of Freedom peculiar to itself ; teaching us the *Nature* of Di-
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vine Worship, which like its awfull Object, is not limited to *Time* or *Place*, or to any particular *Form*. But this Doctrineth doth not annul the Duty of *Public Worship*, nor absolve men from observing it on *proper* and *stated* occasions: and when the generality of Men, especially such as become *more eminently* Examples to others, do, in opposition to Authority, *Human* and *Divine*, assume a Liberty of wholly disregarding these Observances, the *ill* consequences of it will be felt: the Morals of the People will be dissolute; Teachers will lose their influence, Religion its authority, and Laws their force. The *Outworks* of Religion have their use in its Support; when these are razed, it stands exposed to injury and violence; the *Infidel* is encouraged to make a *nearer* attack, attempting *then* to undermine its *Foundations*: these Foundations indeed are not to be shaken by *any* Violence, but Numbers may perish from the fury of the attack.---In a Word; we may observe, a general relaxation of *lesser* Restraints is a sure forerunner of disregard to *greater*: *Habits* of *Negligence* indispose men to severe inquiries; Indolence, Pleasure, Luxury, Vice, by insensible Succession, do rather prepare the Mind for the reception of Notions indulgent to these practices. Then is the time for *the Enemy of Mankind* to beguile unwary Sinners; by his instigation,

stigation, Men governed by Passions and enraged by their disappointment, draw forth their licentious pens against *God* and *Man*; daringly misrepresenting what ceases to be read, and reviling what ceases to be regarded. Doubtless, were the Sacred Volumes as generally read, as they are *without* being read rejected, and unworthily treated, it would preclude many Evils deservedly complained of. It would chasten the licentiousness of Sentiments and Practices; it would shame the Vicious; it would recal the Wavering to fixed and solid Principles; it would establish a general love of Truth, and respect to Order; and would, if any thing, overawe that *Spirit of Infidelity*, which under the cover of *Liberty* hath grown up amongst us to so enormous a Height; characterizing our Days with a profusion of Blasphemy, that may well alarm serious Men.---May it awaken us all to correct in ourselves whatsoever may seem to have encouraged it! as well to check the Evil itself, as to prevent (if possible) the Punishment naturally consequent, to such *unexampled* Provocation.

Attention to our *Religious Duties* will of course regulate our *Civil Conduct*: the *Gospel* prescribing *such* restraints on Civil Liberty, and such *only*, as are requisite to its preservation.

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The *Forms* of Government are left to Human Discretion; the Variety whereof adds a *corresponding* grace to the Diversity of Nature. But *Subjection* to Government, *whatsoever* be its Form, when duly established, and faithfully administered to those Ends for which it is instituted, is enjoined throughout the *Scriptures* with an *Emphasis* and *Authority* that no *Christian* can call in question. *Good Christians* will therefore ever be *good Subjects*. Religion and Government have an intimate connexion and a mutual influence. Happily in *this Country* *Both* are allowed to be Objects of *Free Inquiry*, the *only* means of *establishing* *Both* upon *right Foundations*; nor can they fail of *resting* thereon, whilst this Freedom is tempered with the Reverence due to Subjects so important. Hence, *Patriotism* and *Loyalty* will be duly excited and rightly directed by *true Principles* of Religion; which will ever support true Principles of *Liberty*; and constitute a Union inseparable between a *Free State*, and a *Church*, mild in its Principles, pure in its Doctrines, simple in its Forms, decent in its Worship. Whilst, on the contrary, a Church affecting Splendor and Power, amassing Wealth, overbearing Reason, and oppressing Conscience, can be supported only by a Government as arbitrary as itself: *a right Use* of Liberty will *exclude*

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these, the *Abuse* of it will as surely introduce them.-----Wise Men will be attentive to these Considerations, especially when conferred with the History of former times.

Lessons indeed of Prudence, general and particular, and of the *highest* importance both to *King* and *People*, result from the Considerations suggested by This Day, which the time will not permit us to pursue. We may however observe, that in every State well constituted, the constituent Parts are necessary to each other; the ruin of one must weaken the rest, and shake the whole Frame. *Prerogative* and *Liberty* constitute respectively the *Powers* of *those who govern*, and of *those who are governed*. These, happily tempered and adjusted, present us with the most perfect Model of a Civil State; forming those several Orders, the Result of which, when duly ranged, is Strength, Grace, and Dignity. Such seems the Structure of *our* Constitution: in which these *Powers*, equally sacred and respectable, have their Boundary and Security in the Laws. The *former* of these, *Prerogative*, we are ready enough to confine to its limits; and indeed almost throughout the *preceding* Century, the People had *reason* to watch it with a *jealous* Eye: but thanks be to God! Circumstances are changed: we have now leisure, and we seem to have

have need, to observe rather the limits of *our own Powers*. The Restitution of British Liberty, *Providentially* accomplished for us towards the *end* of that Century, and which the preceding Calamities do naturally call upon us the more thankfully to remember, that Glorious *ÆRA* of our *present* Establishment, hath fixed every Privilege of the Subject upon Foundations (*humanly speaking*) *not* to be shaken, except by *Ourselves*. The People behold their own Strength and Security in This AUGUST ASSEMBLY, which leaves to *us* no other care than temperately to enjoy the Privileges now secure; to respect Public Order and Peace; to acquiesce under the Restraints requisite to preserve *both*; and to be content with that *Use of Liberty*, which Reason, Religion, and Experience shew to be *The only Safe* one.

To conclude. May the History of This Day, applied as a Comment to the Text, warn us to avoid *all* Abuse of Liberty. May it teach us to reverence our Religion as the Fence of our Laws, and our Laws as the Fence of our Liberty; ---to beware of *the Beginning of Strife*, remembering its *End*; ---to restrain partial Cavils, and causeless Murmurs; and rather, whilst we lament the miseries of *former* times, the *more sensibly* to enjoy the blessings of *our own*. We

are now blest with that *Form* of Government, that happy Constitution in Church and State, which those, who had destroyed it, rested not till they had again restored ;--- with a scene of Domestic Peace and Security, of mutual Confidence between King and People, hardly to be paralleled in any period of our History. Popular Discontent never was truly less ; Jealousies, Suspicions, and Prejudices seem to decrease, and we may trust, will soon wear away under the mild and auspicious Reign of a SOVEREIGN, who, if *ever* Prince was such, may *truly* be deemed *the FATHER of his People* ; the more justly intitled to our Affection and Veneration from the *long* experience of his equal Administration ; and whose approved Justice, Vigilance, Moderation, and Constancy, will assuredly be celebrated in *future* History, when Time shall remove the Suspicion of Flattery.

May the Sense of these Blessings make us duly grateful to the Almighty Dispenser of them : May we so *ponder these Things*, as to *understand the Loving-kindness of the Lord* : and may we *so use them as not abusing them*, that they may be continued to us, and to our latest Posterity.

F I N I S.

